

in his field. He is an accomplished surgeon, a clinical assistant professor at the University of Pennsylvania, and an entrepreneur with a highly successful private practice. Dr. Ladenheim recently retired as medical director for Blue Cross, and spent 20 years in practice at Presbyterian Hospital, as well as Nazareth Hospital and Hahnemann Hospital.

Dr. Ladenheim succeeded through hard work and sacrifice. In order to become a doctor he served in the military during the Vietnam War to pay his way through medical school. Throughout his career, he has created programs of outreach to the underserved community of Philadelphia, donating medical services and medicine to families and children who are denied access to health care. Taking the Hippocratic Oath to heart, Dr. Ladenheim is renowned for treating patients regardless of ability to pay, and to help those in need without any thought to his own benefit.

In addition to all of his accomplishments in the field of medicine, he has maintained a strong family life with his wife and three daughters, as well as a notable presence within the community.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that you and my other distinguished colleagues join me in recognizing Dr. Steven Ladenheim for his contributions to the city of Philadelphia and to the medical community.

OUR UNCONSCIONABLE NATIONAL DEBT

HON. MIKE COFFMAN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 19, 2012

Mr. COFFMAN of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, on January 20, 2009, the day President Obama took office, the national debt was \$10,626,877,048,913.08.

Today, it is \$15,776,139,241,010.39. We've added \$5,149,262,192,097.31 to our debt in just over 3 years. This is debt our Nation, our economy, and our children could have avoided with a balanced budget amendment.

Forty-eight years ago today, the Civil Rights Act was approved. This act provided for a brighter future for all Americans. We must not eclipse the hope included in this legislation with the grim future of debt repayment.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. BILL HUIZENGA

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 19, 2012

Mr. HUIZENGA of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 313, I was absent due to a family matter. Had I been present, I would have voted "no."

TO COMMEND COLONEL JOHN J. STRYcula

HON. GERALD E. CONNOLLY

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 19, 2012

Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I join with my colleague, Congressman JAMES

MORAN (VA—8th), to recognize COL John J. Strycula for his service to our Nation and his extraordinary leadership as Commander, U.S. Army Garrison, Fort Belvoir.

On July 7, 2010, COL Strycula assumed command of Fort Belvoir, which is located in the shadow of the Nation's capital and one of the most diverse and complex installations in the United States. In addition to the monumental responsibilities of providing support, services, and a high level quality of life to service members, their families, and related support providers of more than 200,000 people, he was immediately immersed into the most complicated Base Realignment and Closure mission within the Department of Defense.

COL Strycula assumed personal stewardship of all aspects of realignment under BRAC 2005. To accomplish the many aspects of this mission, he oversaw the activities of 150 mission partners on more than \$4 billion in construction and infrastructure improvement projects needed to accommodate the increase of installation population from 30,000 to 48,000 military and civilian personnel. Belvoir North, Fort Belvoir Community Hospital, the Wounded Warrior Complex, the USO Family Support Center, expansion of housing units including state of the art handicapped-accessible housing, child care centers, roads, bridges, fire stations, office buildings, and parking structures are examples of projects completed under the careful watch of COL Strycula.

The "brick and mortar" component of BRAC 2005 tells only part of the story; as impressive as these accomplishments are, the manner in which COL Strycula led the men and women under his command and the mission partners demonstrate the depth of his professionalism and commitment. His open and engaging command climate encouraged initiative and innovation. He has been fully involved in addressing and resolving community issues, both in the neighboring community and in the military community. COL Strycula successfully formed consensus among the various stakeholders on contentious issues, and he established strong relationships of mutual respect with elected and executive leaders in the local, State, and Federal Governments.

The first and most important priority for COL Strycula consistently has been the care and wellbeing of our soldiers and their families. Through his outstanding leadership, vision, and total dedication to soldiers, families, and civilians, he has profoundly impacted and Unproved the quality of life for all at Fort Belvoir. Serving our country in uniform, at home or in harm's way on foreign soil, is the highest of callings, and it is our sacred obligation to ensure that our military and their families receive the support, protections, respect, and services that they have earned.

Prior to his assignment as Commander of Fort Belvoir, he served in numerous capacities including several tours of duty in Operation Desert Shield and Operation Desert Storm. COL Strycula stood up and trained the Army's first Military Intelligence Interrogation Battalion, which he then led in Operation Iraqi Freedom. COL Strycula is a highly decorated officer; his awards include the Bronze Star with two oak leaf clusters, the Meritorious Service Medal with three oak leaf clusters, the Joint Service

Achievement Medal, the Army Achievement Medal, and the Parachutist and Air Assault Badges.

Mr. Speaker, we ask our colleagues to join us in commending COL John J. Strycula for his exceptional leadership of Fort Belvoir through the BRAC process, and in thanking him for his years of service to our country. COL Strycula's accomplishments and expertise have contributed immeasurably to our national defense and security, and he has rightfully earned the admiration, respect, and gratitude of all. We also extend our sincere appreciation to COL Strycula's wife, Wendy, and their 5 children for their support and sacrifices, which have enabled COL Strycula to serve with such distinction. COL Strycula will soon be deploying to Afghanistan, and our thoughts and prayers are with him and his family for his safe return home.

IN HONOR OF GEDLU METAFERIA

HON. RUSS CARNAHAN

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 19, 2012

Mr. CARNAHAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Mr. Gedlu Metaferia, for his decades of service to the people of the St. Louis, Missouri.

Mr. Metaferia started the African Mutual Assistance Association of Missouri, AMAAM, on April 10, 1983 and for nearly 30 years has helped over 30,000 African immigrants and refugees settle into the St. Louis metropolitan area. Today St. Louis is home to almost 6,400 African immigrants and refugees.

As Executive Director, Mr. Metaferia skillfully managed the day-to-day operations of his organization, and he successfully led it toward the fulfillment of its mission to provide culturally and linguistically appropriate social services to African refugees and immigrants. The work of this organization includes: assistance with applications and insurance forms, mediation, education about civic participation, interpretation during medical visits, transportation, and locating housing. Sadly, we are all aware of the plight of refugees and other displaced communities; therefore, I am eternally grateful for the adjustment assistance provided by Mr. Metaferia and his organization.

Mr. Metaferia's efforts have fostered a greater appreciation of diversity, and have advanced ethnic inclusion in the St. Louis community. Moreover, he remains active in the community as a poet, freelance writer, human rights activist, advocate for refugee and immigrant rights, and a member on several non-profit boards. Mr. Metaferia has led by example and demonstrates resilience as a pillar of strength, sound judgment, and compassion.

Mr. Metaferia has dedicated his life to serving and promoting the welfare of others, and he has exemplified extraordinary commitment and selfless dedication. I congratulate Mr. Gedlu Metaferia on his many accomplishments, and I thank him for his continued service to our community.